

THE
Leaven of Pharisaism and Sadducism
PURGED OUT.

A
SERMON

Preached before the
GODLICKS of ACADEMY

City of London
GUILD-HALL CHAPEL

On Sunday Decemb. 16. 1688.

By J. GOODMAN, D.D.

Imprimatur,

Carolus Alston R. P. D. Hen. Episc. Lond.
à Sacris Domesticis.

Jan. 3.
1689.

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THE

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

TO THE

A

CHAPMAN Mayor, &c.

*Cur Special tent' apud Grocers-Hall Die Ven' in Fe-
sto S. Thomæ Apostoli xxi^a Decembris 1688.
Annoq' R' R's Jacobi. Sec' Angl, &c. Quarto.*

THIS Court doth desire Dr. Gooden to Print
his Sermon Preached on Sunday Morning
last at the *Guild-Hall* Chapel, before the Alder-
men of this City.

Wagstaffe.

To the Right Honourable

Sir John Chapman B^t.

LORD MAYOR:

And to the Right Worshipful

The Aldermen of the City of London.

My Lord and Gentlemen.

IN Obedience to your Order, I here present you the Sermon which I lately Preached at your Chapel: And although it hath never been my custom to Dispose your Commands in this Case; yet at this time, I think my self under a double obligation to comply with them: Partly, in regard that Your Lordship by a sudden and dangerous Distemper of Body, was then disabled from affording your Presence at the Delivery of it; and partly in consideration of the seasonableness of the Subject of this discourse, which I verily think to be such as may in a great Measure Atone for whatsoever defects there may be otherwise in the Management of it; and in that confidence, without further Preface or Apology; I commend it to Gods Blessing and your Candour.

A. 2.

May

The Epistle Dedictory.

May it please the Divine Majesty to restore Your Lordships Health; and therewith fill You with such a Measure of his Grace and Holy Spirit, as may enable You to adorn that great Station in which he hath placed You, till it shall please him to prefer You to a Higher in his own Kingdom.

And may all you the Worthy Magistrates of this Great and Famous City, living to see Jerusalem in its Glor; I mean, not only the Times wherein you live, Blessed with Peace and Prosperity, but the Church of God sealed, and the Protestant Religion (which is no other than Primitive Christianity revived in its native Purity and Simplicity) firmly Establisht, which as it will be the greatest Glory to this Age and the greatest Blessing to Posterity; so that You in your Stations may be instrumental in so Glorious a Work, Shall be the Hearty Prayer of

(My Lord and Gentlemen)

Jan. 1st. Your Obedient Servant

1687

J. GOODMAN

SERMON

Preached before the

ALDERMEN

AND

CITIZENS of LONDON.

St. Matth. XVI. 6.

Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

THere are two very common and very unhappy miscarriages in the External management of Religion. Whilſt (on the one ſide) ſome Men think themſelves obliged ſeverely and rigorouſly
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to Prosecute all that differ from them, although it be but in meer opinions, or the Circumstances of Religion. And others on the other hand, seem so cold and unconcerned in this great affair as if all Religions were alike, and it were perfectly indifferent what Principles a Man entertained, so he had but some kind of Devotion.

The former of these Mistakes takes its rise from too confident a presumption of our own Judgment, and a fond and groundless pretence to Infallibility, and therefore exacts of all other Men a Conformity to our Measures. The latter proceeds from an unreasonable a Diffidence and Distrust of the grounds of Believing, as if there was really no *wisdom* or Standard of Truth, and Falshood; and consequently these last sort of men are as void of Faith as the other were of Charity: To be sure, both of them are very dangerous, so far as much as the one beginning in Confidence, ends in Cruelty: The other beginning in *Scepticism*, commonly ends in *Atheism*.

But, both these dangers may in a great Measure be avoided, and great Light gained towards the government of our selves in this weighty and difficult business, by attending to the Carriage of our Saviour towards the several

several Sects of the *Jews* respectively. For where-
as it is well known, that there were three nota-
ble Parties amongst them, commonly distin-
guished by the Names of the *Essenes*, the *Phari-
sees* and the *Sadducees*; it is very remarkable con-
cerning the first of them, namely the *Essenes*:
That though they were very numerous at the
time of our Saviour; and withal, held several
very odd and unjustifiable opinions; yet our
Saviour is so far from all Bitterness and Severi-
ty towards them, that we do not find that he
makes any kind of Reflection upon them.
But for the other two, *viz.* The *Pharisees* and
Sadducees, he upon all occasions sharply in-
veighs against them, and severely exposes them.

Now the reason of this very different Carri-
age of our Saviour seems to be this: That the
Essenes, tho' they were mistaken in some Opini-
ons, yet were sincere in their minds, harmless
in their Lives, quiet and peaceable in their Spi-
rits: They contented themselves to enjoy their
own Consciences, and let other Men alone;
they were not a Confident and Boastful
sort of Men, that must either have the sole
Government of the World, or else be always
Plotting and Contriving of Mischief; but
humble and modest, and so capable of being

recovered from their Errors : But the other two Sects, viz. The Pharisees and Sadducees, they were quite another sort of Men, pretenders to Intallibility, and consequently presumptuous and over-bearing, perpetual Dictators in opinion, fastuous and disdainful towards all others, too wise in their own Eyes to learn of any one, and too sanctimonious to be reproved by any Body; withal, they were a Crafty and Protecting sort of Men that must either Rule or Confound the World. Our Saviour therefore (to Teach us to make a discrimination in the like Cases) as I observed, gently passes by the Essenes, but always sets himself most severely against the two other Sects, and particularly here in my Text, gives his Disciples caution against them; *Take heed and beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.*

The special occasion of these Words was this; If we look to the beginning of this Chapter, we find these two brutish Sects (though at other times they had Hot Disputes between themselves, yet now) lay their Heads together and Conspire against our Saviour : But (as the usual guise of Hypocrites is) they come to him very demurely with these Words, *Master, we would see a Sign from thee.*

What!

What! Had they had no Signs hitherto; had Jesus wrought no Miracles amongst them all this while, or were these Men only strangers to all the great passages of that time?

But, *We would see a Sign from Heaven.* And why a Sign from Heaven; would that be more unexceptionable than any he had hitherto given them; would this convince them? No, that was not their Errand, they came not to be Converted, but to be hardened; they had a mind not to believe, and seek only a colour for their unbelief; they ask him therefore for that which they verily thought he would not grant them, that they might have some pretence for their Infidelity.

Now therefore, our Saviour having discovered their Design, and detected their Hypocritise in the 2, 3, and 4, *Verses* in my Text; turns himself towards his Disciples, and gives them this serious caution against them, and all such kinds of Men *Take heed, and Beware,* &c.

For the full opening of which, I will briefly inquire into these Four things.

First, What is the Importance of this Metaphorical expression *Leaven*; and what our Saviour means by the Leaven of Pharisees and Sadducees.

Secondly,

Secondly, More particularly we will inquire what was the peculiar Leaven of these two Sects, so often mentioned in the *New-Testament*.

Thirdly, We will consider what was the danger of that *Leaven*, and its contrariety to the Doctrine and Design of our Saviour.

Fourthly and Lastly, We will inquire what this Caution of our Saviour implies, and what he would have his Disciples to do, when he bids them *Take heed and beware*, &c.

And by that time I have given Account of these Four things, I shall not only have opened the full scope of the Text, but I hope every attentive Auditor will be satisfied of the reasonableness of this subject for the present Time.

I begin with the *First*, viz. What our Saviour means by *Leaven*: In the Words following my Text, *Vers* 7. We find that the Disciples took our Saviour Literally, and reflecting on themselves for their Omission, to provide Bread and necessaries for the Voyage which they were now entering upon, though he had obliquely reproved their carelessness in that particular, and that he had thence took occasion to interdict them all Trade and Civil commerce with those two Sects of Men. But by

by the 12. Verse they understand their Master's mind better, and knew at Length *That he spake not of the Leaven of Bread, but of the Doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.*

Indeed it is usual with our Saviour, by that Metaphor, to represent Doctrine, whether good or bad, for *Matth. chap. 13. 33.* He compares his own Institution to it, saying the Kingdom of Heaven is like Leaven, which a Woman took and hid in two Measures of Meal, till the whole was Leavened, &c. And the resemblance is very fit and Natural, for as it is the nature of Leaven, that it works insensibly, quickly insinuates it self, and Universally diffuses its Efficacy over the whole Mass into which it is put; so in like manner Doctrine works upon the minds of Men, and gives a Tincture of its own Nature and Temper to them: Inasmuch as that such as a Mans persuasions and Principles are, such ordinarily at least will his Life and Practice be.

It is true indeed, that sometimes Mens Lives are better than their Principles, and sometimes also worse: For it may fall out that Men of very unhappy and mischievous Opinions may yet live virtuously, when the Probity of their Temper is such, as that it Antidotes them against the Malignity and Venome of their persuasions. And

And on the other side, it is no infrequent (tho' an unhappy) spectacle, to behold others of very Noble and Generous principles, as to Doctrine, yet to live very Lewd and Profligate Lives, such Men *with-holding the Truth in unrighteousness*, (as the Apostles Phrase is) or out-facing the Light, and Debauching their Consciences, in compliance with their Lusts and carnal or secular Interests.

But, (as I said) ordinarily it is otherwise, for such a state of contradiction to Principles must needs be violent and unnatural; and the lives and actions of Men do as reasonably bear proportion to the Principles of their Minds and Consciences, as it is Natural for the stream to rise as high as its Source and Fountain, and no higher. Hence it is, that our Saviour, *Matth. 12. 33.* saith, *Either make the Tree good, and his Fruit good: or the Tree Corrupt, and the Fruit Corrupt:* And again, *Matth. 6. 23.* He pronounces, *If the Light that is in Thee be Darkness, that Darkness must be great and intolerable.* To the truth of which Observation, the general experience of all the World, bares ample Testimony amongst several instances of which, I cannot but remark a very pertinent passage of an Hea-then Historian in the Life of that wicked Em-
perour

your *Tiberius*; his Words concerning him are these: *Erat circa Deos negligentior, quippe Mathematicæ addictus, persuasionisque plenus omnia fato agi.* Which I render thus, q. d. *Tiberius* was a profane Prince, careless of Religion, and without any Devotion towards God; and no wonder, for he was an admirer of *Astrology*; and full of the Opinion, that the Starrs or Fate governed the World, and not God.

And in short, this is the true Reason of all Education, and of all the Care and Diligence that evil and good Men use in Propounding and Propagating good Doctrine, and preventing the contrary; not that they think God is pleased with dry opinions and speculations, but because they are aware that Principles draw on Practices, and that evil opinions corrupt good Manners. But so much for that; I proceed.

In the second place, to inquire what was the peculiar *Leaven* of these Pharisees and Sadduces which our Saviour thus cutions against. And for this, the Learned *Jewish* Historian, *Josephus* in his 13th. Book of Antiquities, and in his 2^d. Book of the *Jewish* Wars, hath given us a very exact Account of all the Sects of Religion amongst that People, and from him I shall present this Auditory, with the substance
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of

of what he delivers, touching the Pharisees and Sadducees wherein we are at present concerned.

And first, it is notorious that the Sect of the Sadducees utterly denied the being of Angels and Spirits; or of all Spiritual substances, and acknowledged nothing but Matter or Body in the whole Universe; and consequently hereof, they must also renounce the Immortality of the Soul, the Resurrection of the Body, and Eternal Life in the World to come: Whereas on the contrary, the Pharisees acknowledged all the aforesaid great Articles, as we Learn, *Acts* 23. 8. Only this is to be added what, That these latter entertained so many Legendary Stories about these great Points, and had such very crasie notions of them, that they thereby rendered the very Doctrines ridiculous and incredible.

Again, the Sadducees were gross Idolaters of the Letter, and as they received only the Law of *Moses*, (excluding the Prophets and all other sacred Writings) so they understood the Books of the Law in the most crasie and literal sense, and admitted not of any interpretation or consequence from it, though never so clearly and naturally deduced; On the other side, the Pharisees not only received the whole Scripture of the *Old Testament*, but be-
sides

sides were great *Patrones* of Oral Tradition, and allowed as great or greater authority to it than the written Word; and consequently thought themselves obliged under as great a necessity to the observance of those things that came down to them by the Tradition of their Fathers, as to those they found written in the *Law* and the *Prophecs*; from whence it came to pass (as it must needs do) that their *Creed* became Vast and Voluminous, and their Devotion was Clogged with innumerable Rites and Ceremonies.

The result of all which is this; that the Pharisees had too much Faith (such as it was) and the Sadducees (properly speaking) none at all: The Sadducees could upon their Principles have no ground for any Religion or Piety; and the Pharisees, by their Prodigious additions to Gods Institution, had quite corrupted and lost the true Idea of Religion. In short, whatever cold pretences a Sadducee could make to Civility or Morality; it is evident, he could have no Devotion. On the contrary, the very Character of a Pharisee was a confident Devotionist, without Morality.

Now, from what hath been delivered in this short Account of these two Sects, it will be easie to discern the reason why our Saviour gives such caution against their *Leaven*, and

what

what the mischief and danger to his Doctrine and Design was from each of them singly, or both together. Which is the

3. Third Inquiry; but because herein lies especially the Emphasis of the Text, I will give a more particular Account of this matter as followeth:

And first as touching the Sadducees; it is manifest by what hath been said, that their *Leaven* was the same with that of the *Epicurean* Philosophers, and could by no means be a Principle of Conscience or Religion, but a Doctrine Calculated for this present Life; for believing neither Angel nor Spirit, nor any thing to be in the World but meer Matter; it was impossible they should have any concern for another World, and consequently they could have no Religion, only as the Law of *Moses* was *lex Terræ* the Law of the Land; so far it stood them in hand to observe it, or at least to pretend an external Conformity to it, for the sake of their secular Interests and Advantages. To be sure such Principles could lay no obligation upon their Consciences; and therefore they were the truest Race of *Latitudinarians*, and could comply with whatsoever was uppermost; and upon that score, could not withstand the Temptation of being of the Religion of the *Prince*, whatever it was.

Accor-

Accordingly, it is observable in a Parallel place to this of my Text; namely, *Mark* 8. 15. For the *Leaven* of the Pharisees, we have the *Leaven* of Herod, as signifying the same thing, for these Men it seems consistently enough with their Principles, could flatter that vile Prince, so far as to cry him up for the *Messias*.

It was Isay, a Sect or *Leaven* fit for Men of Covetous and Ambitious designs, and was successful to those purposes; for *Acts* 5. 17. We find the great Council or *Sanhedrin* of the *Jews*, chiefly consisted of those of this *Leaven*. These Men were of the Spawn of the *Levitean*, and derived the sanction of Religion from humane Legislation, and the commands of God obliged no further than they were enacted by the Civil Magistrate.

Besides all this, they had the right knack of Trimming between all Religions; for whatsoever was the inward opinion of their mind, they could conceal or deny, or mince the matter, so that their Persuasion should never expose them to any damage, nor their Conscience interfere with their Interests.

Now, the Christian Religion which our Saviour came to introduce and to plant in the World, being not only a very strict and Holy, but a most solemn and serious institution: Nothing could be more contrary to it than such

such loose Principles as these; His was a Religion fitted to please God, not to flatter and humour Men: It was a Religion designed for the saving of Mens Souls in another World, and to fit them for Eternal Life, and not to serve a turn, or to save a Stake in this World. Upon all which, there can be no wonder that he earnestly Cautions against the *Leaven* of the Sadducees which undermined the Principles of all Religion.

And then in the next place, for the Religion of the Pharisees, that (by what was said in the description of their *Leaven*) consisting of so many incredible Articles of Faith, grounded only upon Tradition and Legendary Stories, and of such innumerable trifling and Arbitrary Rites and Ceremonies, and yet made essentially necessary to Salvation, was utterly contrary to the whole tenor and design of the Gospel, as might be made appear in innumerable instances, of which I will here specify only these five particulars following.

In the first place, a principal Design of our *Saviour* in the Doctrine of the Gospel, was to instruct Men with right notions of God, which is not only the first and most immediate honour to the Divine Majesty, but the only solid Foundation of all Vertue and Piety: The right apprehension of Gods Perfections and Attributes, being

being the great obligation upon our minds, to reverence and observe him in general, and being of great use also, to direct us in the particular instances of our Duty towards him. Now the Pharisees Superstition was contrariwise very apt to breed in Men, very mean and unworthy notions of the Divine Majesty; and so tended naturally both to confound the Measures, and to subvert the very ground and Reason of Piety and Vertue.

Partly, as it mightily abated of his Grandeur and Majesty whilst it represented him, as insisting upon so many little things as carried neither weight nor worth, nor intrinsic Reason in them. We always count it an Argument of a little mind to be wrought upon by meer Completments, to be pleased with Trifles, and to be offended with such Ceremonious Omissions: And we cannot naturally esteem him to be a Wise and great Man, whom we observe to be of that temper; much less can we imagine that he should be an infinitely wise God, a full perfect and self-sufficient being, that will incline to be flattered with Ceremonies, be forced with Gifts, be propitiated with formal Oblations, be complemented with external Addresses, imposed upon by shows and shadows, or be offended for the want of any such things. Now the Pharisees *Leaves* consisting wholly of these, with

without regard to true Piety, and generous Obedience and conformity of Heart and Life to him; quite clouded and obscured the glory of his Divinity, and rendred him more like a Man than a God, and indeed more like a little necessitous narrow minded Man, than a wife and a great one.

Partly, as it rendred him an unbenign and captious Deity, such an one as insited upon very *Punctilio's*, and was prone to take advantage of his Creatures upon the smallest omissions; the effects of which must needs be, that Men might be possibly Temptred to fear, and to stand under the slavish dread of such a God, but it was plainly impossible they should love him; without which there can be no Life nor Soul in Religion.

Above all this, the Pharisical *Leaven* represented the Divine Majesty as a Selfish and Tyrannical Being, as if he looked only at his own ends, and had no regard to the good of his Creatures, and more aimed at the obtaining his own Will of them, than had any respect to the true use and reason of things, or design of the good and happiness of Men: For how could it be otherwise; or how could Men think otherwise of him, that insited as much upon clean Hands as upon a pure Heart; that was as much offended with the Omission of a Ritual, as of

a Moral precept, and that would take the Sacrifice of a Beast, in the exchange for obedience of a Man. Now the Doctrine of the Pharisees bringing in such apprehensions of Religion as these are, must needs therewithal introduce very mean, low and unworthy notions of God, and thereby undermine true Piety, and especially that of the Gospel.

Again, in the second place, the design of our Sa-
viour was to make Religion easie and delightful, and not only passible, but acceptable to all Men; that so his institution might become the Religion of all the World, the truly *Catholic Religion*.

To this purpose, he was to lay open all Inclosures, to pare off all Superfluities, to retrench the redundancy of troublesome and unnecessary Ceremonies; so to bring Religion into as narrow a compass as was possible, that it might fall in the better with the occasions of humane Life; and that the affairs of Heaven and Earth might not interfere, he was to make it fully reasonable, and the reason of it so conspicuous as that it might commend it self to the minds of all Men; He was to accommodate it to humane Nature in general, so that no quality or condition of Life should be incapable of it, that it should be impossible to no constitution; excluded from no place, Climate or Country; that it should be inconsistent with no form of Government, nor inconvenient for any Age or time of the World.

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All this was aimed at in the institution of Christian Religion; and all this was Crossed and Contradicted by the *Leaven* of the Pharisees, for that consisted of so many Articles of Faith, as it was impossible to persuade all Men of: It had so many Rites and Ceremonies, peculiar to one Country, one Climate, or Place, or Condition, or Constitution of Men; and others so numerous, as were very troublesome to those that were most Conscientious of them, and most of them founded upon such reasons, as few Men could be satisfied with, and yet all of them made indispensably necessary; that it became not only a very uneasy Religion, but impossible to a great part of Men, and unacceptable to all: And therefore, was so far unfit to become the *Catholic* or Universal Religion; that it could be only the Cognizance of a Sect and Party, and fitter to divide the World than to Unite it.

It must needs have been very burthen some to the Bodies of Men, - to be bound to observe so many washings and instances of external Cleanneſs, as their Superſtition required: And it could not but be very troublesome to the minds and Memories of Men, to retain so many little things as were strictly to be observed, and yet could not take hold of a Mans mind, because they had no Foundation in reason: And above all, it must needs be intolerable to the Conſciences of Men, and hold them in perpetual anxiety and solicitude, when a Mans Duty was so large,

as that he could scarce ever tell when he had done, and every thing was alike necessary, and so the danger was Fatal, if he Omitted or failed in any part of it. Upon all these Accounts, Pharisaism contradicted the design of our Saviour in the institution of Christianity; and therefore he cautions his Disciples against it.

Moreover Thirdly, such a troublesome and circumstantial way of Religion as that of the Pharisees; under the form, supplants the very Power of Godliness: Partly, as these nice and troublesome observances weary the minds of Men and exhaust their best Spirits; and so that Zeal is spent upon Trifles which should have been reserved for more weighty occasions: As we commonly observe of a bad Diet, that it not only corrupts the humours of the Body, filling it with ill Juices, but also clogs and satiates the Natural Appetite of the Stomach, and leads it to all those things that might be wholesome and beneficial; but principally, this Pompous Form undermines the power of Religion, as it renders Men prone to hope to make amends for the defect of the latter, by the redundancy of the former; for it is too common and usual for Men to think to expiate Immorality by Superstition: And we generally observe, that those who are over-precise in little matters, are apt to indulge themselves too much in great.

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Thus, our Saviour upbraids these very Men we speak of, *Matth. 23. 23.* That under pretence of being more than exact in *Tythings*, *Mint*, *Annis*, and *Commis*, they neglected the weighty matters of the Law; *Justice*, *Mercy*, and *Faith*: And again, *Matth. 15. 3.* He tells them they notoriously made void the *Commandments* of God through their *Traditions*; for by their *Corban*, they Legitimated unnaturalness towards their Parents; by their long Prayers, they hoped to make amends for devouring Widows Houses, and by outward washings, to expiate their inward Impurities: And for the sake of these things, our Saviour (whose Design was to introduce true and unfeigned goodness, and sincere and unaffected Piety) severely interdicts this *Leaven*.

Furthermore, in the Fourth place; as it is usually observed, that light things are puffy and turgid, so it is certain that such an empty and Pompous Religion as that of the Pharisees, usually swells and puffs Men up with Pride and conceit of themselves, which temper is the furthest projection from that of the Gospel: Such a Train of observances as they had, made a very Glorious and Sanctimonious show, and raised the admiration of the World, and thereby deceived them into a great Opinion of themselves: It was an easy and cheap way to Saintship, for the observation of Rites and Ceremonies cost them little self-denial and mortification; and yet it served to make them to be thought the only People: Accordingly

ingly they had a saying amongst the Jews in those times; that, *If there were but two Men to go to Heaven, the one would be a Scribe, and the other a Pharisee.* Thus were these Aiery Bubbles blown up to Heaven, both in the conceit of the World, and in their own Opinion: So we observe in the Gospel, *Luke 18. 11.* Whereas the poor *Publican* is dejected in the Presence of God, in contemplation of his own miscarriages; and therefore dares scarce look up towards Heaven, but modestly snites upon his Breasts, and Prays, *God be Merciful to me a Sinner;* The Pharisee transported with vulgar Applause and Self-admiration, boldly out-faces God and Man, and cries out, *God, I thank thee that I am not like other Men; for I Fast twice a Week, and pay Tithes of all I Possess, &c.* And therefore challenges Heaven as due to his Merit.

Not unlike Servants are the new invented Orders of Modern Pharisees, who upon the Account of their Observation of certain Rules of their own Invention, and of the Vows of Fantallick Poverty, uncommanded abstinences from Flesh or Marriages, or blind Obedience to their Superiors, call themselves the Religious; and all the World of good Christians besides, the Seculars or the Men of this World. Of such a stultent Nature is Superstition: And thus false and supercilious doth it reach all the Profelytes to it; and therefore our Saviour, whose intention

tion was to bring Humility and Modesty into Fashion, exhortations earnestly against this *Leaven* of *pride* and *saferly*, our Saviour by his Institution, designed to bring in Gentleness and Kindness, Love and good will amongst Men. But such an external and etheal Religion as that of the Pharisees naturally tends to make a Man quarrelsome and contentious, Carnal and sanguinary: For in end first place, the particulars or instances of Superstition are many and numerous, and so liable to be mistaken; for in many things, we offend all, or worse our Obligation is very large, our Duty is very Nice and difficult. Again, such things being neither manifestly required by clear Reason nor by evident Revelation, men needs be always uncertain, and so become matter of endless dispute and contention; especially if all things be alike necessary, and that Eternal depends upon every Punishment: No wonder if Men be fierce and eager, so that is morally vulnerable in every place, must needs be very jealous and curious: To all which add, that the Man who hath his Religion in his Fingers ends *et in finibus* ad *sedes* *aliquos* *penitentiam*; as if *the* *man* *expresses* it; this Man must needs be very pertinacious and dogmatical, very decetory and additive, so that there can be no disputing with such a Man without *harshness*; and this Superstition by all these considerations, will raise him to such a Heat and Confidence, that

that he will think he doth God good service to kill those that differ from him.

Of this *St. Paul* himself was an Example; he was bred at the Feet of *Gamaliel*, a Learned Tractuary Doctor, and after the strictest Sect of the Jewish Religion, a Pharisee; and all this served to inflame him against Christ and his Religion and Disciples, to such a degree, that he confesses he was mad against them, and thought he ought to do whatsoever he did or could do against that Name and Institution.

The same thing *Tertullian* 1400 Years ago observed of the Jews in general; his words are, *Synagoga Judæorum facies persecutionum*: The Jewish Zealots were constantly the great inflamers of Persecution against Christianity; and they when they could not do it themselves, exasperated the Pagans and put them upon it.

A Jewish Spirit is everlastingly a persecuting Spirit, and of all mankind a Pharisee (whatever he may pretend) can never be in earnest for Toleration: I would to God the Experience of all Ages had not born too undeniable a Testimony to the truth of this Observation, and that modern Pharisaism had in this respect amended the matter: But *Leaven* is *Leaven*, and will ever have the same Operation.

The Man that considers his Religion, and weighs the reasons of it, before he embraces it, will be Gentle and Charitable towards those that differ from

from Him, or are not of his Attainment; he considers the shortness of humane Understanding, that he may be deceived himself, and therefore pities those that are so; he makes allowance for different Constitutions, several ways of Education, and the prejudices incident to Men in this World: but the blind *Zelot* that believes with his Will, not his Understanding, that sees with other Mens Eyes, and enslaves his mind to other Mens dictates; in a word, the Traditionalary Pharisee, is bold and violent, cruel and unmerciful.

And the Man that is heartily and sincerely virtuous, he is pitiful and compassionate to the infirmities of mankind; he considers humane frailty, and the Temptations we are beset withal, how many times we do that which we cannot allow or justify, and judges of other Men as he would be judged himself: But the supercilious Pharisee, makes no reflection upon himself; and therefore hath no Mercy nor Compassion towards others.

St. *Austin*, in answer to the *Manichees*, and particularly to that Epistle of theirs, called, *Fundamentum*, hath this Noble and Christian passage: *Illi in vos serviant, qui nesciunt quanto cum labore veritas inveniat, & quam difficulter errores caveantur; with many other excellent Words to that purpose.* (Let those saith he) *Persecute you, who neither knew the difficulty of discovering Truth, and of avoiding Error; but so will not I, who have Erred as you do*

dg. and hardly recovered the firm ground of Truth; that work is only fit for them that have their Religion by Boss, and their Devotion by Iniquity, that never studied for Knowledge; nor laboured for Vertue; that are Liable by an implicit Faith, and devout without Piety, that is those that are of the right *Leaven* of Pharisaism.

These in short, are some of the Causes why our Saviour gave such a strict and Solemn charge against the *Leaven* of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. And now, it is time to come to the Fourth and last Branch of my Text; namely, to shew what our Saviour means by this expression, *Take heed and beware, and what is the Duty of his Disciples in this Particular*, and that I will now endeavour briefly to explain, and then conclude.

In order to which, in the first place it is to be observed, that the Emphasis lies in the word *Leaven*; which is not so much the Merit of the Sect of the Pharisees and Sadducees, that are to be avoided, as the *Leaven* of those Sects, and that is so much the more to be taken care of; because there may be the *Leaven* of those Sects, though the Name be forgotten, and the Men so called, be gone off the Stage. And it is much to be doubted, or rather it is past doubts, that there is a *Leaven* of Pharisaism, and Sadducism amongst Christians as well as there was amongst the Jews, and perhaps amongst *Protestants* as well as *Papists*; and

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the more,

therefore, it will be our Duty to observe and distinguish it; As for Instance,

Wherever we find a sort of Pretenders to the *Atomical* or *Epicurean* Philosophy, that assert there is nothing but Matter or Body in the Universe; these Men, let them be otherwise never so Ingenious, or let them cover and disguise the business as well as they can, must necessarily upon their Principles, take away the being of Angels and Spirits, and all the concern of another World; and therefore, are of the *Leaven* of Sadducism.

Or if there be in this Age those that would persuade themselves and others, that it is a piece of Superstition to be afraid in Conscience, or a kind of Fanaticism to be curious what Religion a Man is of, and that that whole affair is Matter of indifference, since God is pleased with variety, or regards not what Principles Men are of, so they be Devout and Honest in their respective persuasions: This conceit wherever it is, is nothing better than a piece of the Old *Leaven* of Sadducism.

Or if there be those that assert, that the Religion of Christ Jesus, is only to be of the Religion of the Prince and Country.

Or that whatsoever a Man believes in his Heart, it is lawful for him to conceal and disguise it, and to make profession of that which comports best with his Safety and Interest; all this is Sadducism.

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To give one instance more on this Head; Whoever they be that would persuade us, we must needs understand those famous words, *Abse est Corpus meum*, in the gross literal sense, against all the Reason of the world, and the very Testimony of our Saviour; this is neither better nor worse, than a spice of old Sadducism.

And then on the other side, (for the Pharisees) Wherever we observe Men building their Faith and Religion upon Oral and unwritten Tradition, and equalling that to the Holy Scripture and written Word of God, this is Pharisaism.

Or wherever we find Men imposing upon others, a vast and voluminous Creed, and enjoying a World of Nice Observances; under the Pretail of Eternal Damnation, (as they be not complied with) or the Yoke laid upon the Neck of the Disciples of our Lord, no whit Inferiour to that of *Judaism*; in all this, there is the Spirit of Pharisaism.

Wherever we see Men lay mighty stress upon disputable Opinions, or to Save or Damn Men accordingly as they are of such or such a Party, here is the plain Genius of Pharisaism.

To name no more, Wherever we observe Men to be mighty pretenders to Devotion, but careles of Justice and Charity; or to strain at a Gnat and swallow a Camel; all this is the *Legacy of Pharisaism*, wherever it is found, and to be avoided accordingly.

In the next place, let us consider the Emphasis of these Words of our Saviour, *spem & certitudinem habete*; *Take heed and beware*; it is an earnest expression that I do not remember to have observed above once more in the whole *New Testament*, and (to be sure) imports no less, than that great application of mind is required in this particular. Religion is certainly a business that deserves to be well considered of, and to be carefully examined and well understood as well as devoutly professed; nor is there any thing in this World, for the sake of which God gave us our Understanding, more than to inquire into this weighty affair: And the least that can be made of the charge here in the Text, is, that we by no means allow our selves *Supinely* to swallow what so ever is either first Suggested, or impudently Dictated to us, since such an Implicit Faith, is the very first working of the *Leaven* of the Phariseism and Sadducism; and the vindicting our selves to our selves, and the asserting the Freedom of our own Thoughts and Liberty of judging for our selves is the first Step to true and generous Christianity, and the way to be eventually secured from the aforesaid *Leaven*; For Example;

If we freely consult our own Reason, we shall never be able to think of God Almighty as of a partial Deity, or an accepter of Persons, that will Save *our* Nation, Men in gross, accordingly as they shall be of such a Sect or Party: We shall never

never be able to imagine, that a great and wise Majesty, will have any great value for empty forms and meer Pagantry of Religion; as if we had a Fancy like that of the *Pantomime* at Rome, who having been admired by the Rabble, would needs have the fondness to go also into the Capitol, and play his Tricks over before the Gods, as if God must needs be pleased with what the silly multitude admired.

It can never enter into a considering Mans thoughts, that the Divine Majesty should be propitiated with Beads and Baubles, that Money should Purchase his Favour to the Wicked Man, that he should be corrupted with Bribes, or imposed upon, and won with Complements.

In a word, no Man that hath, and makes use of the discretion of a reasonable Creature, can think so unworthily of God, as that he should be fatally offended with little mistakes in Opinion; or that he will cast away a very sincere and Devout Man, meerly upon the Account of a Ceremony under or over; and he that allows himself but this kind of modest Freedom of mind, hath made good Provision against the danger of the *Leaven* of Pharisaism and Sadducism.

Again, in the Third place; the most effectual security against the aforesaid *Leaven*, is to keep to the Holy Scriptures, especially of the *New Testament*; to study that, and take all the Measures of

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our Religion thence: If we trust to the Authority and dictates of Men, or to the Customs and Fashions of the World; they will betray us to those *Leavens*; or if merely upon unwritten Tradition, that like a common Sewer brings down for the most part, the Trash and Rubbish of former times; very often letting the most weighty things sink and perish in the passage: For proof of which, we need no other evidence, but the experience of the *Jews*, amongst whom, one cannot but admire, what childish and ridiculous Stories, this way of Tradition hath filled them with; insofmuch, that this Oral part of their Religion, hath almost quite disparaged that which was written and Divinely revealed, merely by the Vicinage and Conjunction with it.

Whereas, if we attend, to and study the Holy Scripture; that will not only preserve us from such mean and unworthy Notions of God and Religion; but will ingage us in such a method as shall both make us better Men, and the World the better for us.

If we govern our selves by Tradition and the Fancies of Men, then all our Care and Devotion will be laid out in Cultivating an Opinion in Ceremonious Addresses to the Deity, in Pompous Oblations, or in Scrupulous Observance; but if we consult the Scripture, that will teach us, *that God will have Mercy and not Sacrifice*, and that a pure Mind

Mind and an Holy Life, are more acceptable to him than long Prayers, frequent Fasts, and the most costly Offerings: There we shall find, that the first and great Commandment of Gods Law is, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy Heart, and with all thy Mind, and with all thy Strength*; and that whatever demonstrates sincere Love to him, be it little or much, is sure to procure his Favour: These we shall learn expressly, that the Lord our God is not pleased with the Fat of Lambs, nor propitiated with Rivers of Oyl; neither doth he require the fruit of our Bodies, to expiate the Sin of our Souls; *but that we do justly, and love Mercy, and walk humbly with our God*: The due consideration of which passages of Scripture, will effectually Antidote us against the Infection of any of the aforesaid *Leavens*.

To all which; I add in the last place, that if we do but mind the Nature and Notion of Christianity, and consider the Genius and Spirit of that Religion, we are safe; particularly, if we do but look upon it under the representation which those two Words or Phrases give of it; whereby it is called, *a reasonable Service, and a Spiritual Worship*.

As for the former, no Man can be so absurd, as to think that a reasonable service which is built upon an implicit Faith, and where a Man understands nothing of the Reason and Grounds of his Religion,

Religion, but in a Blind Obedience, fervently and brutishly gives himself up to the Conduct of others, or when he Worships God in all Language, which he hath no knowledge or understanding;

And as for the other Phrase of a Spiritual Worship; can any Man of common Sense take that to be a Spiritual Religion, which is made up of Bodily Drudgeries; of meer Forms, and Rites, and Ceremonies? But to be a Christian, is to have worthy Notions of God in our minds, and a flame of fervent Piety and Devotion to him in our Hearts; to Love him, to Fear him, to Trust in him, to be Holy, and Just and Sober in our Lives, and to be peaceable in our Spirits; such a Religion as this is worthy of God so was he for the Son of God to be; the Author, and Publisher of; and the Conscientious Observance of it will fit us for, and in due time bring us to the possession of the Heavenly Mansions above, and the Eternal Society of glorious Saints and Angels in Heaven: Which God grant to us all, through the Merits and Mediation of the same Jesus Christ Our Lord: To whom be Glory and Honour, and Adoration, for ever, and every Amen. Amen.

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